

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-60 are pending in the present application. In the Office Action mailed July 22, 2004, the Examiner rejected claims 1-60 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

A. Rejection of Claims 1-7, 10-26, 29-47 and 50-60 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-7, 10-26, 29-47 and 50-60 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on U.S. Patent No. 5,903,882 to Asay et al. (hereinafter, “Asay”) in view of a press release from RSA Security, Inc. entitled “RSA Security Simplifies PKI Application Development” (hereinafter, “RSA Press Release”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. In addition, the combination of the prior art references must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. MPEP § 2143.

Claim 1 recites “issuing to the subscriber an application-specific certificate.” Neither Asay nor the RSA Press Release, alone or in combination, teach or suggest this limitation.

The Examiner asserts that “Asay teaches ... issuing to the subscriber a server-specific certificate for use by the server.” Office Action, page 2. Applicants respectfully disagree. In Asay, the certification authority 102 issues a primary certificate 110 to the subscriber mechanism 106. Asay also discloses a reliance server 104 that issues a secondary certificate 118. However, the reliance server 104 issues the secondary certificate 118 to the relying party mechanism 108, not the subscriber mechanism 106. Asay states:

The reliance server determines whether or not to issue the secondary certificate 118 to the relying party mechanism 108 based on information in the request 116, on previous requests based on the primary certificate 110, and information that it has previously obtained from the certification authority mechanism 102 regarding the primary certificate 110.

Asay, col. 10, lines 45-50 (emphasis added). Figure 3 of Asay also shows the reliance server 104 sending the secondary certificate 118 to the relying party mechanism 108, not the subscriber mechanism 106.

The RSA Press Release does not make up for the deficiencies of Asay. The Examiner asserts that “RSA Security teaches the integrating of the certificate authority into an application.” Office Action, page 3. Even if the Examiner’s assertion is correct, “integrating … the certificate authority into an application” does not teach or suggest “issuing to the subscriber an application-specific certificate.” Moreover, Applicants cannot find any portion of the RSA Press Release that teaches or suggests “issuing to the subscriber an application-specific certificate.”

In fact, the RSA Press Release teaches away from the use of application-specific certificates. The RSA Press Release describes the release of RSA BSAFE Cert-C software (hereinafter, “Cert-C software”). The Cert-C software provides a “way to create PKI-enabled applications that work with public key infrastructures from a wide range of vendors.” RSA Press Release, page 1, paragraph 1 (emphasis added). Issuing an application-specific certificate to the subscriber, as recited in claim 1, obviates the need for the application to “work with public key infrastructures from a wide range of vendors.” Instead, the application is responsible for its own PKI infrastructure.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentably distinct from the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Claims 2-7 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 2-7 be withdrawn for at least the same reasons as those presented above in connection with claim 1.

Claim 10 recites “issuing a first application-specific certificate to the subscriber” and “issuing a second application-specific certificate to the subscriber.” In view of the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Asay and the RSA Press Release does not teach or suggest these limitations. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 10 be withdrawn.

Claims 11-18 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 10. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 11-18 be withdrawn for at least the same reasons as those presented above in connection with claim 10.

Claim 19 recites “issuing a[n] … application-specific certificate to each subscriber.” In view of the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Asay and the RSA Press Release does not teach or suggest this limitation. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 19 be withdrawn.

Claim 20 depends from claim 19. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 20 be withdrawn for at least the same reasons as those presented above in connection with claim 19.

Claim 21 recites an “application-specific certification authority configured to issue an application-specific certificate to a subscriber.” In view of the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Asay and the RSA Press Release does not teach or suggest this limitation. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 21 be withdrawn.

Claims 22-26 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 21. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 22-26 be withdrawn for at least the same reasons as those presented above in connection with claim 21.

Claim 29 recites “a first certification authority … for issuing a first application-specific certificate to a subscriber” and “a second certification authority … for issuing a second application-specific certificate to a subscriber.” In view of the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Asay and the RSA Press Release does not teach or suggest these limitations. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 29 be withdrawn.

Claims 30-38 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 29. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 30-38 be withdrawn for at least the same reasons as those presented above in connection with claim 29.

Claim 39 recites a “certificate issuance component … for issuing an application-specific certificate to each subscriber.” In view of the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Asay and the RSA Press Release does not teach or suggest this limitation. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 39 be withdrawn.

Claim 40 depends from claim 39. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 40 be withdrawn for at least the same reasons as those presented above in connection with claim 39.

Claim 41 recites “program code for issuing to the subscriber an application-specific certificate.” In view of the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Asay and the RSA Press Release does not teach or suggest this limitation. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 41 be withdrawn.

Claims 42-47 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 41. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 42-47 be withdrawn for at least the same reasons as those presented above in connection with claim 41.

Claim 50 recites “program code for issuing a first application-specific certificate to the subscriber” and “program code for issuing a second application-specific certificate to the subscriber.” In view of the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Asay and the RSA Press Release does not teach or suggest these limitations. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 50 be withdrawn.

Claims 51-58 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 50. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 51-58 be withdrawn for at least the same reasons as those presented above in connection with claim 50.

Claim 59 recites “program code for issuing a[n] … application-specific certificate to each subscriber.” In view of the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Asay and the RSA Press Release does not teach or suggest this limitation. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 59 be withdrawn.

Claim 60 depends from claim 59. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 60 be withdrawn for at least the same reasons as those presented above in connection with claim 59.

B. Rejection of Claims 8-9, 27-28 and 48-49 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 8-9, 27-28 and 48-49 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Asay in view of the RSA Press Release and also in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,192,130 to Otway (hereinafter, “Otway”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 8-9 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 1. Claim 1 recites “issuing to the subscriber an application-specific certificate.” As discussed above, neither Asay nor the RSA Press Release, alone or in combination, teach or suggest this limitation.

Otway does not make up for the deficiencies of Asay and the RSA Press Release. The Examiner asserts that “Otway teaches disclos[ing] the encrypting of the private key of the application-specific certificate with the public key of the master certificate.” Office Action, page 6. Even if the Examiner’s assertion is correct, “encrypting … the private key of the application-specific certificate with the public key of the master certificate” does not teach or suggest “issuing to the subscriber an application-specific certificate.” Moreover, Applicants cannot find any portion of Otway that teaches or suggests “issuing to the subscriber an application-specific certificate.”

In addition, to the extent that the Examiner is asserting that Otway teaches or suggests an “application-specific certificate,” Applicants respectfully disagree. The portion of Otway cited by the Examiner refers to a “key history data signer” that “uses the export encryption public key to encrypt the private keys in the key history.” Otway, col. 6, lines 47-48. However, Applicants do not see any connection between the key history data signer and an application that issues an “application-specific certificate.” If the Examiner maintains the rejection, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner specifically point out which component he believes is the “application” recited in claim 1, and which component he believes is the “application-specific certificate” recited in claim 1.

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In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 8-9 are patentably distinct from the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 8-9 be withdrawn.

Claims 27-28 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 21. Claim 21 recites an “application-specific certification authority configured to issue an application-specific certificate to a subscriber.” In view of the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Asay, the RSA Press Release and Otway does not teach or suggest this limitation. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 27-28 be withdrawn.

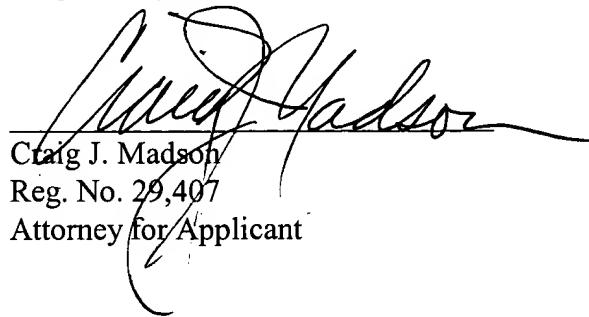
Claims 48-49 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 41. Claim 41 recites “program code for issuing to the subscriber an application-specific certificate.” In view of the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Asay, the RSA Press Release and Otway does not teach or suggest this limitation. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 48-49 be withdrawn.

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C. Conclusion

Applicants respectfully assert that claims 1-60 are patentably distinct from the cited references, and request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If there are any remaining issues preventing allowance of the pending claims that may be clarified by telephone, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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